04. *[The Questioners (Shri Ram Jethamalani Shri Sardar Jogjit Singh Arora) were absent for answer,*
Vide *col.* 32-33 I*nfra]*

Visit of a US team to India

*405. SHRI KAPIL VERMA

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what was the outcome of the recent visit of the U.S. team led by Mr. Robert Gates, Deputy U.S. National Security Advisor to Delhi; and

(b) whether the team carried any message from the President of U.S.A. to the Prime Minister of India; if so, the details of the message and response of the Prime Minister thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I. K. GUJRAL) : (a) Mr. Robert Gates visited India as a Special Envoy of President Bush to discuss the question of defusing tensions between India and Pakistan. Mr. Gates was informed that the main cause for the escalation of military tension was Pakistan's blatant assistance to terrorism and sub version in J&K and Punjab and that the elimination of these activities was essential in addressing the present situation.

(b) In his letter to the Prime Minister, President Bush expressed concern at the escalation of tensions in the sub-continent and urged India and Pakistan to engage in a bilateral dialogue and undertake confidence-building measures to defuse tensions.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: Is it correct that Mr. Gates was told by Pakistani leaders that they had already closed 30 training camps for terrorists, thereby implicity conceding that Pakistan was running such camps ? Has this admission 'convinced the United States of Pakistan's involvement arid do they now See the smoking guns: for which they were looking ?'

Part (b) of my question is this. According to Washington-datelined reports of May 24, the Bush Administration officials said that the US administration has formally offered fresh proposals whereby it could play its role to facilitate reduction of tensions and the two countries were studying the proposals. Now, I want to know from the Government whether this statement is correct or not. If it is correct, what are their proposals and what is the Government of India's reaction to them ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, so far as I understood from my hon. friend, he wants to know about 30 or so camps being run by Pakistan which they have said they are going to close down or have closed down, since the information was given to us in confidence, I hope my hon. friend will not insist on my confirming or denying it.

So far as confidence-building proposals are concerned, the American Government made it clear that they did not want either to intervene or arbitrate or in any way get into it as the third party. We have made it clear that this is a bilateral issue which must be discussed within the framework of the Shimla Agreement.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA : Apart from the talks that the Prime Minister had with Mr. Gates, he also had a telephonic talk with Mr. Gorbachev on Monday last. Now, if this is correct, what are Mr. Gorbachev's latest views ? Has there been any shift in the stand of both the super-powers ? The U.S. Mr. Gorbachev had wide-ranging discussions. What is more important is, is there any identity in the approach for the two super-powers on the

*The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Kapil Verma.

Kashmir issue ? May I know from the Minister whether the Kashmir issue has been placed on the agenda of the summit of the two Presidents of the United States and the USSR ? There are reports which appeared today about this issue being on the agenda of the two Presidents of the US and the USSR.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : When Mr. Baker visited Moscow recently, according to our information, a suggestion was made by the American Foreign Secretary to his Soviet counterpart that some sort of a joint statement or joint approach be made. The Soviets did not agree, and rightly, on the ground that this would internationalise the issue. The Soviet line is very clear and very helpful to us and they agree with the line that we are taking.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA : What about the summit and Mr; Gorbachev's views ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Well, I cannot predict about the summit but whatever we have been told by the Soviet authorities, they are confirming and supporting India's stand.

SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA : May I know from the hon. Minister what steps have been taken to counter the diplomatic offensive by the Pakistan Government and Mrs. Bhutto on this issue ? May I know whether the Government is in touch with important countries and members of the Security Council to convince them of our stand ? What has been the result of Mrs. Bhutto's tour according to Government's information ? Did Mr. Gates make any suggestion directly or indirectly for any structural or Constitutional changes in respect of Jammu and Kashmir for pacification ? If so, what is the Government's reaction ?

SHRI I, K. GUJRAL :. We have kept ourselves informed, about, the Prime Minister of Pakistan's "visit to the eight countries and our information is that most of these countries have advised her that it will be better to defuse tension and enter into bilateral discussions within the framework of the Shimla Agreement.

SHRI G. G. SWELL : Sir, Mr. Gates has not come all the way here as an envoy of the American President just to convey their namby-pamby request that we shall be good boys not to go into war with Pakistan. He must have come here with a bagful of information. I am sure Mr. Gates is aware what their spy satellites have conveyed that Pakistan is moving its vehicles and special racks fitted with nuclear warheads from its Kahuta nuclear base to the airfield. Under the Symington amendment, any country that violates the non-proliferation treaty, that deals with nuclear weapons forfeits the right of any aid and assistance from America. Have we taken up this with Mr. Gates ? Have we made a request to the Government of America even at this stage that they should withdraw their F-16 aircraft from Pakistan ? And that is the best way to ensure that there is peace in the sub-continent.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, the effort by the President of America in sending his envoy was well motivated and we appreciate it. So far as the withdraw of the support or the arms supply to Pakistan is concerned, we reiterated our well-known stand to Mr. Gates and his friends. At the same time, we have taken note of the news that has appeared regarding nuclear arms etc. We are trying to verify the facts.

SHRI SUKOMAL SEN : Sir, there is a report in the press that the United States is trying and seriously thinking of bringing the ; issue of Kashmir in the Security Council: of the United Nations.. I ' would like to know whether this

report is correct, and if so, how the Government of India is responding to it.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : So far as our information goes, the United States of America has advised Pakistan not to try to internationalise the issue.

PROF. CHANDRESH P. THAKUR : Mr. Chairman Sir, what is happening between India and Pakistan has a lot of link historically with what the United States of America has been doing in relation to Pakistan, whether it is with regard to the defence aid that they are getting, whether it is with regard to their attitude towards Kashmir or whether it is with regard to the United Nations attitude towards Pakistan's stand in international fora. So far as Kashmir issue is concerned, they have been deeply involved. Is there some evidence that whatever we have been doing either bilaterally with the United States or at the international forum, the Government of India is making some progress and was there some progress evident in the Gates mission when that gentleman came and met the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister ? If so, what are the concrete results ?

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, I do not like to make tall claims. That is not my way of thinking in our projection. But I would say that we are feeling satisfied that our position is being by and large appreciated by most of the world.

SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY : Sir, the observation made by the Bush Administration regarding the Kashmir issue has not gone in favour of India. In this connection, I want to know whether the Government had prior information about the visit of the U.S. team or not. Secondly, I want to know whether the Government consider it to be a fact-finding Mission or a goodwill Mission. And thirdly, I want to know what will be the reaction of the Government regarding the findings of Mr. Robert Gates.

SHRI I. K. GUJRAL : Sir, sending special envoys by Heads of Government and Heads of State is part of normal diplomatic activity these days and between friendly countries, this is always a welcome gesture and therefore when this delegation came, we welcomed them, we met them at all levels and we explained our position and heard their point of view.

*406- *[The questioner (Shri Rajni Ranjan Sahtu) was absent. For answer,* vide *Col.* 33 infra],

Pakistan Prime Minister's visit to Arab States

*407. SHRI SHANTI TYAGI : Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of Prime Minister of Pakistan Ms. Benazir Bhutto's current visit to eight West Asian States to elicit support against India on the Kashmir issue ; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take to further explain to the Governments of this region the reality of Pakistan's interference in the internal affairs of India and also creating war hysteria ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI HARI KI-SHORE SINGH) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Concerned Governments have been fully apprised of Pakistan's support and encouragement to terrorism and subversion directed against India. Broadly speaking, the response has been positive and one of understanding.

We shall continue to keep these and other countries informed of the factual position and our standpoint.